

18th Sunday B August 4, 2024

Father Salvatore Mellone story moved many thousands of people. He was born in Italy, Apulia province in the year March 9, 1977. He joined in the seminary on 2011. He was to have at least two more years of seminary when he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. By special permission and the blessing of Pope Francis he was ordained nevertheless. Two days before his ordination on April 16th 2015, he received a phone call from Pope Francis. "The first blessing that you will give as a priest, you will give to me. Salvatore, I am with you, you will be ordained and you will celebrate mass", the pope assured him over the phone.

At his ordination, Fr. Mellone said, "today I feel myself carried on the shoulders of Christ, and as a priest I will wear the stole with Christ, for the salvation of the world. Moreover, to celebrate just one Eucharist, for me will be a real participation in the priesthood of Christ". He was ordained at the age of 38 for the Archdiocese of Trani-Barletta-Bisceglie . He lived as priest for two and half months died on June 29th 2015.

In today's gospel, Jesus teaches us about spiritual hunger and our need for him, as heavenly food, to satisfy our spiritual hunger for God. In what context did Jesus tell this message to them. People were looking for a repeat performance of their miraculous feeding. But Jesus told them that they looked for him for another free meal and that meal would not satisfy them. Hence, he instructed them to labor for food that would give them eternal life. Those who want to see eternal life, they need to believe in Jesus and follow in his way of life. Jesus is the messiah and is holy and is a loving God. He forgives all our sins. Jesus gives eternal life for them.

In the first reading, Israel's people complained to God for the food. They got angry at Moses and they became impatient with Moses. They could not understand the greatness of God. God heard the complaints of His people and lavished on them food from heaven in the form of fleshy quails in the evening and delicious manna in the morning.

God offers himself to us in Jesus and wants us to follow his way – the life – giving way. Jesus satisfies of our spiritual hunger through the word of God and by giving himself in the form of the Holy Eucharist. It is a sacramental

sign of Jesus' real bodily presence in His glorified risen body. This bread of life – which is Jesus himself – gives mankind a new relationship with God, a relationship of trust, obedience and love.

We believe that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life, because it contains the whole spiritual good of the church, namely Jesus himself. The Eucharist is a sacrament of love that unites us with Christ who lived, died and rose again to bring us salvation , strengthens and makes holy our relationship with our fellow Christians , nourishes us with the transforming power of grace and prepares us for the future glory of God's heavenly banquet.

The Holy Eucharist – It gives us:

1. Courage to carry out God's work in the world.
2. Help to live the life God wants for us.
3. Inspiration to know the will of God in our lives.
4. A deeper understanding of the holy mystery of Christ presence.
5. Encouragement to love others and strengthened their faith of the community.
6. Grace to overcome temptation and avoid sin.
7. Joy and peace of heart, knowing that Christ lives in us and will bring us to God's heavenly kingdom.

The Holy Eucharist is food for our soul giving us a share in God's life.

The more we give ourselves our time, our talents, our presence to others without counting the cost- the more we come close to doing what God wants of us. Instead of putting on us on God for all our problems in life, let us take personal responsibility and contribute our share of blessings in others welfare.